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REPORT OF COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE

PROVINCIAL SYNOD,

TO ENQUIRE INTO AND REPORT UPON

THE INDIAN MISSIONS

OF THE CHURCH IN THIS PROVINCE.

[*Read and adopted at the 4th Session of the Provincial Synod, held at Montreal, September*, 1868.]

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REPORT ON INDIAN MISSIONS.

The Committee appointed by the Provincial Synod to enquire into and report upon the Indian Missions of the Church in this Province, gladly avail themselves of the opportunity to bring under the notice of the Synod the condition and prospects of the Indian tribes, scattered throughout the Dioceses embraced within its jurisdiction.

When European colonists first entered on the settlement of these Provinces, the great valley of the St. Lawrence and the whole western peninsula were occupied by numerous tribes of Iroquois, Hurons, Ojibways and other Indian nations. Of these, the Iroquois entered into friendly alliance with the English colonists, faithfully maintained their relations with them, and followed their fortunes in the war of Independence; hence bodies of the Six Nation Indians now settled on the Bay of Quinte and on the Grand River, in western Canada, are the descendants of the loyal Indian tribes who maintained their fidelity to the British Crown, and the first colonists of Upper Canada. Of the Hurons, who were the original occupants of an important region of western Canada, and the friendly allies of the French colonists, one small branch is now settled on the Charles River, below Quebec, and another in the township of Andertoir in the West. Other large bodies of Iroquois are settled at St. Lewis, St. Regis and other points in the Dioceses of Montreal and Quebec, along with Abenaquis, Aimalicites and Micmacs. And in the Province of Ontario, still larger bodies of Algonquins of various tribes are congregated at different points, both on the mainland and on the Islands of Lake Huron. Many of these Indians are settled on reserves

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under the care of the Indian Department; but a considerable number of them wander in an improvident and unsettled condition, deprived of the old resources of their hunting grounds, and frequently reduced to great misery by the indirect influences of European Colonisation.

But besides these, there is still included within the Diocese of Toronto the whole of the extensive region lying between Lakes Huron and Superior, and the height of land which forms the southern boundary of the Hudson's Bay, embracing an enormous tract with numerous Indian tribes still living in the condition of savage Pagans.

From enquiries instituted for the purpose of ascertaining the requirements for Indian Mission work by our Church, it is estimated that there are not less than 15,000 aborigines still surviving within the area of the united Provinces represented by this Synod, apart from those of the Eastern Provinces and the Diocese of Rupert's Land.

Hitherto, however, the Missionary work on behalf of the aborigines, has been carried on on a scale wholly inadequate to the wants of the numerous tribes thus, as it were, committed to our care; and to a great extent, by means of funds supplied from the mother country. But the time has now come when a great and an united effort on the part of our own Church, to occupy this important field of Missionary labour, cannot longer be delayed.

Thousands are perishing within our reach in pagan darkness. A new generation is growing up, still immersed in gross superstition, and with the vices of the savage too frequently aggravated by those which they have learned from intercourse with the whites. Year by year fresh encroachments are made on the territories of ancient nations or the reserves ceded by treaty to their survivors. Within the present century whole tribes have disappeared from our midst, and in localities where many still living can remember them as numerous, they are almost or altogether unknown.

When we reflect that their loss is our gain; that our towns and cities are rising on the land once belonging to those Indian nations; that our schools, colleges, and churches, are built on the sites of their native villages; and our clearings have eradicated their hunting grounds; it cannot be too strongly impressed on us that we are under deep obligations to them in return. While labouring to plant and extend the church in these provinces, we cannot overlook the solemn obligation that rests upon us to care for the souls of those whose earthly inheritance we are appropriating to our own use; and who are perishing in our midst, as the inevitable result of our progress.

It is the duty of the Church to gather into the fold of Christ the remnants of these simple children of the forest still within reach of its missionary labours, and who, if not now brought under the blessed influences of the Gospel, and cheered by its glad tidings, will, ere long, be beyond the reach of its promises and its blessings. Amid the numerous pressing claims of the Church in these provinces, it may justly feel exempt from obligation to share in the noble missionary enterprise which the mother church is now carrying on in every quarter of the Globe; but the Indians of British North America are in a peculiar manner committed to our care; a grave and solemn responsibility rests upon us, as a Church, to rescue them ere too late from the degradation of heathenism and to make them sharers with ourselves in the blessings of salvation.

The following statement of the several Indian Missions in connection with the Church, within the various dioceses of this Ecclesiastical Province, obtained from the Missionaries, is here presented:

DIOCESES OF QUEBEC AND MONTREAL.

The only tribe of Indians under the teaching of the Church in these Dioceses is that called the Abenaquis. This Mission

is under the charge of the Rev. O. Fortin, B. A., and is situated on the St. Francis River, which here forms the boundary between the two Dioceses. The reserve, which is considerable, extends on both sides of the River, from the Rapids to the Lake; and is confirmed to the tribe by an Act of Parliament. The population is 366; Christians not increasing nor yet diminishing. The Church is a neat and substantial structure, well appointed, and will accommodate 150. Average winter attendance, 50. Number of communicants, 22.

"There is a school held in a rented building, taught by a native, who is supported by the Sabrevois Mission. Attendance, 28.

"There is cause for encouragement in a spiritual point of view. A few in the Mission, from confirmed drunkards, have become earnest zealous Christians. Many have taken the pledge, and hitherto the majority have kept their vow."

"The temporal progress of the Mission has been very marked during the last three years. We only began our work here four years ago, and everything had to be done. A School was established, a Church and Parsonage erected, and a sufficiently large piece of land purchased to provide the Missionary with a garden."

DIOCESE OF ONTARIO.—MOHAWKS, B. Q.

There is but one Indian Mission in this Diocese, viz: That among the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte. The Missionary, the Rev. G. Anderson, M. A., reports;—He has now been 18 years resident among them. The Indians contribute $600 towards his support, besides appropriating 80 acres as a Glebe, on which are erected a comfortable Parsonage and outbuildings.

These Indians have a reserve of 18,000 acres, situated on the shores of the Bay of Quinte, secured to them by Letters Patent. The population this year is 683, exceeding that of the last by 19. There are two schools; one supported by the

New England Company, (the oldest Missionary Society in Great Britain, A. D., 1666,) average attendance, 19; the other by the tribe; attendance, 24. There are in this Mission two handsome stone Churches, well appointed, built for the most part by the Mohawks. These Churches are well attended. Communicants, 108.

HURON.

In this Diocese there are several interesting and successful missions. Of these, the Mission to the Six Nation Indians of the Grand River, is the largest and most important. There are three Missionaries, viz: Rev. Messrs. Nelles, Elliot and Roberts. It is situated on an Indian reserve of about 50,000 acres, on the south side of the Grand River. The population, according to the last return, is 2786. They have gradually increased in numbers for several years past. About two-thirds are women and children. One third of the whole are still pagans. Besides the old Mohawk Church, (which is supposed to be the oldest church edifice in Ontario,) there are two others; one a frame building at Tuscarora in good repair, and another very handsome new brick edifice at Kanyeageh; each of these will accommodate about 300. At present there are eight schools in successful operation, at which there are 366 children in attendance:—about an equal number of boys and girls. At the Mohawk Institution the children, 90, are boarded, and instructed in various branches of useful labor. The progress of these children is much more marked than in the other schools, owing to irregularity of attendance at the latter.

The Missionaries and School Teachers, as well as the Mohawk Institution, are all supported by the New England Company, who, for the last two centuries, have proved themselves the kind and generous benefactors of several Indian tribes of this continent.

DELAWARE AND CARADOC MISSION.

This Mission is under the charge of a faithful native Clergyman, the Rev. H. P. Chase, and embraces four tribes settled in the townships of Delaware, Caradoc and Ortord, viz: the Munsees, Delawares, Oneidas and Ojibways. The three former migrated from the United States some years ago; and having sold out their possessions there, purchased the land on which they reside. The late Rev. R. Flood, a devoted Missionary, was instrumental in converting many of these Indians, and bringing others from other folds into the Church, and materially improving their moral and social condition.

The Munsees, who reside in the Township of Caradoc, have a commodious brick Church, in which two services are held each Sunday; average (joint) attendance, 100. The total population at this station, Munsees and Ojibways inclusive, is 600. The Munsees have a School, the teacher of which is paid by the Church Society of the Diocese; average attendance, 30. The Ojibways have two schools, and suitable houses; the teachers are paid from Indian funds. Attendance at each, 25. Communicants, 114.

ONEIDAS.

This tribe is located in the Township of Delaware. Population, 550. Previous to their removal into Canada they joined the Protestant Episcopal Church, and had to a great extent adopted the habits of civilized life. They are now surrounded by the comforts and conveniences of a farming people. Finding the congregation (which averages 100,) growing too large for the school-room, they have taken in hand the erection of a Church which will be completed in October. The communicants here are 54. There being no permanent provision for a teacher at this station, the Missionary expresses his regret that the school is irregularly kept.

THE DELAWARES.

This tribe settled many years since in the Township of Orford, under the spiritual care of Moravian Missionaries. Many of them have, however, united with the Church. They have a comfortable Church, a school-house and master paid by the Indian Department. Average congregation, 70.

The Missionary reports that during the past five years, 234 members of these tribes have been admitted to the Communion of the Church by the rite of Confirmation.

OJIBWAYS OF SARNIA.

This band occupies a reserve of 7500 acres allotted to them by the government, on the River St. Clair. The Rev. E. F. Wilson, a grandson of the late Bishop of Calcutta, has devoted himself to labour among the scattered remnants of this tribe under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. He has just entered on his work, and reports, that the population in this reserve is about 400, about 16 families profess to belong to the Church. Communicants 15. He proposes to erect a Mission House School. A church to accommodate 150 is in course of erection—the Indians voluntarily helping.

There are other bands of this tribe, to which Mr. Wilson devotes his attention;—one at Kettle Point, on Lake Huron, 30 miles from Sarnia, which is visited alternately every fortnight by the Missionary and Interpreter. There are about 100 Ojibways on this reserve, which comprises 5000 acres. The services and school here are held at a private house, there being no church or school-house. These poor people are anxious for a teacher,—the present instruction being given voluntarily by an Indian—supplemented by the Missionary and Interpreter, on their visits. The attendance both at the school and service is very encouraging.

There is another settlement of this tribe on an extensive reserve at Cape Croker, Lake Huron. Population 350. About

eight families profess to belong to the Church. There is a good school-house here with teacher supported by the Church Society of the Huron Diocese; about 25 children attend. The service is regularly read in Indian on Sundays, by a lay reader—average attendance, 20. A log church in course of erection is unfortunately at a stand for want of funds.

Another band of this tribe is settled on two reserves, at Saugeen, near Southampton; there are about 250 on each, all Ojibways. Many of these Indians were originally attached to the church, but have been lost for want of a missionary. There are still a few families who retain their attachment to her. The special oversight of these isolated bands having been confided to Dr. Wilson, the happiest results may be anticipated from his zeal and influence.

WALPOLE ISLAND.

The Committee regret that there is no report from this interesting mission.

The Church Society of the Diocese of Huron expend annually about $900 in supporting missionaries, school masters and interpreters among the Indians.

DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

In this Diocese there are two Indian Missions: one at Garden River, near the Sault Ste. Marie.—This mission is situated on an extensive Reserve made by the Crown and is under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Chance, who is supported by the New England Company. Mrs. Chance, who assists her husband as school-mistress, is paid by the Colonial Church and School Society.

The number of Church Indians at this station is 120, of whom 42 are communicants. The number of children attending the school is 29. There are a church, school and mission

house at this station. The other mission is that on the Manitoulin Island. The Rev. J. Sims is in charge of this mission, with his head quarters at Skegwaindah. He is supported by grants of equal amount from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Colonial and Continental Church and School Society, and the Mission Board of the Diocese. The Indian Department makes an allowance (£50) for the support of one master, and the Mission Board appropriate annually $300 towards the support of a teacher at Little Current, besides grants towards buildings within the mission, travelling expenses of the missionaries and an interpreter. The S. P. G. has intimated its intention of withdrawing its grant after the present year.

The number of Indians on the island attached to the Church is 184, of these 34 are communicants. They are scattered in small settlements at Manitowaning, Little Current, Sheguaindah, and La Cloche, and are mingled with others who are still pagans. Many of the latter are favourably disposed to Christianity and anxious for schools among them.

A large and interesting field for missionary exertion among the Indians extends along the north shore of Lake Superior, and on the Islands and on the lakes and rivers of the interior, where openings abound, which a want of men and means have hitherto prevented the Church from entering upon the improvement of.

The late Bishop of Toronto was, for many years, anxious that a missionary Bishop should be appointed for that region; and the speedy opening up of that territory for settlement now presses it on the consideration of the church; your Committee therefore earnestly hope that the Memorial of the Diocese of Toronto in that behalf will receive due attention at this meeting of the Provincial Synod.

The time has come when it is indispensable for the Canadian Church to bear a more adequate share than she has

hitherto done in the great work committed to the Apostles and to the Church in every age, to preach the Gospel to every creature whom its glad tidings may have yet failed to reach; and in a peculiar manner it is incumbent on us to carry those glad tidings to the poor perishing Indians, who, on the very outskirts of our prosperous and happy settlements, are still in pagan darkness.

In suggesting methods for raising the necessary means for carrying on this good work among them, the Committee would invite attention to the following extract from a letter of the Bishop of Rupert's Land to the late lamented Metropolitan, who strongly commended it to their notice:—

"I believe sermons and meetings for the heathen would vastly aid your home work. I can testify from experience, how the love that has been brought out in England for poor heathen souls, has been the means of giving new life to our Church in England. I believe that if your Synod were to enact that there should be an annual sermon for Indian Missions, none of your parishes would be the poorer for their home necessities, and you might expect a double blessing from God. *It is Christ's Message to the Church to be ever going out into the world, ever rather seeking the lost one,—the only one—than sitting at ease by the gathered-in ones.*"

Your Committee cannot better close their report than by quoting the advice of the late Metropolitan on the subject:—"As this is a matter in which the Synod of the whole Province is concerned, and as the original inhabitants of the soil, in whatever particular districts they may be located, have a special claim upon the sympathy and Christian love of all the members of the Church, now being planted in Canada, I think the Committee should put forth an appeal for circulation in the several Dioceses, showing the efforts now making in connection with these Indian Missions, and what requires to be done in order to make some sufficient provision for their necessities."

"The Very Rev. the Dean of Montreal has kindly promised to place the Cathedral here, at the service of the Committee, in order that the cause of Indian missions may be advocated and collections taken up; and I have no doubt but that the use of many churches may be obtained for the same purpose."

The Committee cannot conclude without adverting to the loss, by death, of one of their number, since the last meeting of the Synod, viz: the late W. H. Davies, Esquire, an old and faithful member of the Church, whose removal affords us another solemn admonition to labour diligently while the day of opportunity lasts.

SALTERN GIVINS,
Chairman.